

for coverage of the clinical trial that could save his life.

A fifth important distinction between the competing proposals is that the Republican Task Force proposal does not provide for ongoing access to specialists for chronic conditions. Many chronic conditions, such as Multiple Sclerosis or arthritis, require routine care from specially-trained physicians, like neurologists or rheumatologists.

It is one thing to ask an enrollee to get a referral for an isolated visit to a specialist. But those with chronic conditions need a standing referral to those specialists or to be able to designate the specialist as their primary care provider. This protection is not in the Republican Task Force bill.

A sixth distinction between the two is that the Patients' Bill of Rights does more to ensure that individuals are able to see the doctor of their own choosing. Both bills have a point-of-service provision that allows individuals to see health care providers not in their plans closed panel, but the Republican Task Force bill contains a loophole that renders the protection a hollow one for millions of Americans.

Under the Republican bill, a health plan would not have to offer employees a point-of-service option if they could demonstrate that the separate coverage would be more than 1 percent higher than the premium for the closed panel plan. And this needs to be only a theoretical increase. The bill allows health plans to provide an only actuarial speculation that the costs would increase and they are relieved of having to offer employees this benefit.

Perhaps more amazing is the fact that this exemption is triggered even if the employees selecting the point of service option would pay all of the costs of the improved coverage themselves. Under the Republican Task Force bill, employees who are willing to pay the entire added cost for the ability to obtain out-of-network care can be denied access to this benefit if the employer is able to speculate that the costs might be higher.

That is the ultimate in paternalism. The bipartisan bill I support, the Patients' Bill of Rights, lets the employees decide for themselves if they want to purchase this enhanced coverage.

A seventh key difference between the two bills is that the Patients' Bill of Rights ensures that health plans not place inappropriate financial incentives on providers to withhold care. Medicare regulations very explicitly limit the kind of financial arrangements that health plans can have with providers protecting seniors from providers who may get a financial windfall by delivering less care.

#### TRIBUTE TO MRS. HELEN SEWELL

### HON. NEWT GINGRICH

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, August 6, 1998*

Mr. GINGRICH. Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw my colleagues' attention to this feature piece from The U.S. Capitol Historical Society newsletter, The Capitol Dome. For 60 years now, Helen Sewell has been the manager of

the snack bar in the Republican cloakroom and a mother to every member who has sat down to one of her hefty tuna salad sandwiches. Mrs. Sewell began working in the cloakroom while she was in junior high school and her father ran the snack bar. Since that time, she has served coffee and sandwiches to thousands of members, including several former presidents. In fact, according to some accounts, it was her cottage cheese with Worcestershire source that helped put Gerald Ford in the White House. Even today, when President Ford visits the House, he stops by for a visit with Helen. President Bush does the same. I think that my colleagues will enjoy this tribute to Mrs. Sewell. I did, and it is richly deserved.

#### 'HELEN'S CAFE'—CAPITOL CONCESSIONAIRE REMINISCES

As the red neon sign bearing her name shines brightly above, Helen Sewell busily prepares for the day at her cafe. As manager of a small concession stand offering a variety of sandwiches, soups, sodas, coffee, candy, ice cream and other snacks, she caters to a unique clientele—Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, Majority Leader Dick Armey and the 226 other Republican Members of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Helen's domain is the concession counter in the Republican Cloak Room, located just outside the House of Representatives Chamber. The cloak rooms are private enclaves where Members can relax, make phone calls and, thanks to Helen, enjoy everything from a light snack to a hearty sandwich. Now 80 years of age, she has been working at the counter since the 1930s when she was a teenager helping her father prepare snacks for Members of Congress. "It was intimidating at first," Helen recalled, "but I got used to it, and now I just love it."

With more than 60 years of service, Helen has become something of an institution. In comparison, Helen's counterparts in the Democratic Cloak Room have come and gone for more than three generations. Currently, Cindy Edmondson works (as she has for a dozen years) in the Democratic Cloak Room concession.

According to Helen, her father came to Washington from Lovejoy, Ill., with his Member of Congress who helped get him a job as an attendant in the cloak room. "But he got so tired of just hanging up coats and hats," Helen reminisced, "so one day he brought in fruit, candy and drinks for the Members, and they really appreciated it."

Each Member who visits "Helen's Cafe" is part of her extended family. "I know every Republican Member of Congress . . . I fuss with them, and they fuss back. We're like family here and we're extremely close." It is obvious that her customers consider her to be a part of the family as well. They bought her a television so she could keep up with her favorite soaps; former Congressman Pat Roberts, now a Senator from Kansas, also gave Helen a new chair because he was concerned about her health; Amory Houghton of the 31st Congressional District of New York, commissioned the neon sign that proudly announces "Helen's Cafe." "They worry about me too much," Helen says modestly.

In fact, when she was hospitalized a few years ago with a heart attack, she received dozens of get-well cards and bouquets of flowers. She is convinced that the Members really missed her sandwiches. "I'm pretty heavy-handed with my sandwiches," Helen admits, referring to the generous size of her culinary creations.

Working in the cloak room over six decades, Helen has witnessed much of the nation's history. She has a photographic memory and vividly remembers events such as the day in 1954 when Puerto Rican nationalists fired several shots from the House Gallery and wounded five Members of Congress. She has met many of the Members' spouses and children, including the Society's President, Clarence Brown, when his father served in Congress before him.

The recent deaths of Bill Emerson and Sonny Bono particularly sadden Helen. "I remember when Bill Emerson passed away," Helen said softly. "It was an emotional day . . . I was very close to him," she said of the Missouri Congressman she had known since he had been a House Page in 1953.

Away from the Capitol, Helen is a proud grandparent and is active in community life. Her two daughters and one son have given Helen nine grandchildren and five great-grand children. A life-long resident of Washington, she has strong ties to the Petworth Community where she attends the Petworth United Methodist Church. For more than thirty years Helen has been an active member of the Northwest Boundary Civic Association. For fun, she admits with a chuckle, she occasionally visits the casinos in Atlantic City, N.J.

When the question of retirement comes up, Helen immediately says "no." She plans to continue working for as long as she is physically able. Besides, who could make such great tuna sandwiches?

#### RECOGNIZING THE HOME HEALTH ASSEMBLY OF NEW JERSEY ON TWENTY FIVE YEARS OF SERVICE

### HON. MICHAEL PAPPAS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, August 6, 1998*

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Home Health Assembly of New Jersey, which is celebrating their twenty-fifth year of providing health care services to the caregivers and citizens of New Jersey.

In the face of our nation's every-changing healthcare system, the Home Health Assembly of New Jersey has served as a consistent and reliable source of support, education and advocacy for those who administer home health care and to those who receive it. As the state's largest and most comprehensive professional home care association, home care providers, hospices and associations have relied on their knowledge and insight for a quarter-century.

Mr. Speaker, home health care allows so many of our citizens to receive necessary health care in comfortable and familiar surroundings. Equally important to the physical health care services which home health care providers offer to the elderly, the disabled, children and adults, is the emotional support they give. Offering a hand to hold and a shoulder to lean on makes one's illness more manageable and more hopeful.

Through their leadership and advocacy, the Home Health Assembly of New Jersey has truly achieved its mission of being "the Voice for Home Care in New Jersey." I wish the Assembly continued success in the future years of service which they will provide to the people of New Jersey.